Sterling College Criminal Justice Program

Description of Major

The objective of the Criminal Justice major is to prepare students to directly enter the criminal justice system upon graduation, or to continue their education at the graduate level. Students may choose a concentration in Law Enforcement or Pre-Law. The curriculum provides students the occasion to be exposed to a wide array of criminal justice topics in the class room, as well as gaining experience in the field of criminal justice through internship opportunities.

Course Descriptions

CJ 110 Introduction to Criminal Justice

3 credits

This course provides an initial overview of the criminal justice system and is designed to familiarize students with the basic facets and components of criminal justice at the local, state and federal levels. (Fall)

CJ 210 Criminology

3 credits

Overview of the primary criminological theories, as well as an examination of the social context within each was developed. This course also examines how the theories aid in explaining causation of crime. (Spring)

Prerequisite: CJ 110

CJ 220 Criminal Law

3 credits

This course explores substantive criminal law by way of a case study approach and examination of statutory law. The study includes analysis of criminal acts, required elements of crimes, punishments and possible defenses to criminal conduct. Crimes against persons, as well as property crimes are examined. (Fall/Even Years) Prerequisite: CJ 110

CJ 230 Criminal Procedure

3 credits

A concentration on the rules of criminal procedure as they related to the criminal justice process, including rights of those accused of crimes, arrests, search and seizure, interrogation, confessions, right to counsel and the exclusionary rule. (Spring/Odd Years) Prerequisite: CJ 220

CJ 240 Corrections, Probation and Parole

3 credits

An overview of the theory behind corrections, as well as historical and current practices of corrections within the criminal justice system. This course examines various types of correctional institutions, alternatives to incarceration, legal rights of inmates, reintegration into the community following release, parole/probation and major issues confronting correctional institutions. (Fall/Odd Years)

Prerequisite: CJ 110

CJ 250 Judicial Process

3 credits

A study of the judicial process, including historical foundations, jurisdiction of state and federal courts, roles of individuals (i.e. judge, jury, and attorneys), standards of proof, and sufficiency of evidence. This class also provides opportunities for students to learn techniques that will help in giving credible and effective testimony in court. (Spring/Even Years)

Prerequisite: CJ 110

CJ 310 Criminal Investigation

3 credits

A study of the basic means and methods, procedures and techniques available to law enforcement for investigating crimes. Attention is also given to the foundational elements of the rules of evidence as applied to investigations. (Fall/Even Years) Prerequisite: CJ 220 and CJ 230

CJ 320 Criminal Justice Administration

3 credits

A study of leadership theory as it relates to the effective administration and management of a criminal justice agency. The course also examines decision-making, finance and budgeting, recruitment and selection of personnel, training, and policy development. (Fall/Odd Years)

Prerequisite: CJ 110

CJ 330 Drugs, Alcohol and Crime

3 credits

This course examines the history and prevalence of drug and alcohol use in America, as well as the criminal repercussions of such use. Attention is also given to causes of and treatment for addiction, drug identification, and enforcement of drug and alcohol laws. (Spring/Even Years)

CJ 340 Juvenile Justice and Deliquency

3 credits

An examination of the juvenile offender within the juvenile justice system. Includes theories of juvenile delinquency, form and function of juvenile courts, social factors associated with juvenile criminal behavior and legal rights of juveniles. (Fall/Even Years) Prerequisite: CJ 110

CJ 350 Diversity Issues in Criminal Justice

3 credits

A study of the full range of individual differences across the spectrum of the criminal justice system. Includes discussions of diversity based on experience, age, race, gender, socio-economic class and disabilities, and how these variances impact everyone within the criminal justice system. (Spring/Odd Years)

Prerequisite: CJ 110

CJ 360 Law Enforcement Internship

1-3 credits

This internship is designed to give criminal justice students enrolled in the law enforcement concentration the opportunity to gain real world experience. Students will be connected with a local law enforcement agency or officer and must complete a minimum of 50 hours of experience for each hour of academic credit. All internships must be pre-approved prior to the beginning of the internship.

CJ 370 Legal Internship

1-3 credits

This internship is designed to give criminal justice students enrolled in the pre-law concentration the opportunity to gain real world experience. Students will be connected with a local attorney or law firm and must complete a minimum of 50 hours of experience for each hour of academic credit. All internships must be pre-approved prior to the beginning of the internship.

CJ 380 Terrorism and Homeland Security

3 credits

This course focuses on the impact that terrorism has on individuals, society and government in our country. Included are discussions of the impact of terrorism on law enforcement, especially first responders, changes in Americans perspective on constitutional rights, and government responses to terrorism. (Spring/Odd Years)

CJ 390 Independent Study

1-3 credits

This course provides students with an in-depth study of a current topic of interest in criminal justice. Requires prior approval by instructor.

Prerequisites: Junior or senior in criminal justice.

CJ 410 Senior Seminar

1 credit

This seminar is an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge and experiences gained from the criminal justice curriculum through class discussions, presentations and the completion of a major senior project. This course is writing intensive. Prerequisite: Senior standing in criminal justice.

CJ 420 Legal Research Methods

3 credits

This course introduces students to the basic techniques of legal research, writing and analysis. Attention is given to briefing of cases, researching legal issues, and framing legal arguments. (Fall/Odd Years)

Prerequisite: Junior or senior standing in criminal justice.

CJ 280/480 Special Topics in Criminal Justice

1-3 credits

Topics related to specific subjects within the field of criminal justice that are not taught as a component of the standard curriculum.